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Source: Citizen of the CSSR, a female of Ukrainian birth, who visited in  
Canada in early June 1968

Re: Latest Developments in Ukraine

Date: 11 June 1968

1. According to the latest information, Zina Franko, the grand-daughter of the famous Ukrainian writer and poet, Ivan Franko, is not only going to be dismissed from her job, but probably put on trial as well, for her attempt to smuggle the Valentyn Moroz letter to Czechoslovakia.

In January of 1968 Andrey Kurimsky of Prague sent a speech by Vačulik to Zina in a candy box through two Czech women working with him at the Institute of Languages. (Kurimsky is working on Slavic dictionaries.) Zina received the speech by Vaculik and in return sent him Moroz's letter in the same manner. On the border the two women were searched, Moroz's letter which was on film was found in the box of candy, and the Czechs told the customs officers from whom they had received it and for whom the film was meant. However, after their arrival in Prague, they mentioned the story to Kurimsky only four to six weeks after the incident. In the meantime they had been interrogated by Czech officials.

February - March 1968 Oksana Muráško visited Kiev and was told the story by the people there and assured that Kurimsky had nothing to worry about since the film had not been delivered and secondly, the material was quite innocent.

In early May of 1968 the Procurator of the Prague district summoned Kurimsky to his office and asked him whether he knew Valentyn Moroz. Kurimsky said that he did not. Then he was asked whether he knows Zina Franko. Kurimsky answered that he does. The Procurator then told him the whole story and in-

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licated that the whole affair might have been just a provocation. Kurimsky agreed that this was quite possible. The Procurator told Kurimsky not to worry and explained to him that the Kiev Procurator's Office had sent a request to the Prague Procurator's Office to investigate this case, and to inform Kiev about whatever they learned from Kurimsky. According to the Procurator in Prague, he understood it as some sort of court investigation proceedings against Zina Franko which might end in a formal trial but not necessarily so.

In the meantime, Zina wrote to the Czech women to apologize for having caused them so much trouble. Obviously this could now be used as additional evidence against Zina, and there could be no question of provocation as the Prague Procurator had suggested.

2. Mykhaylyna Kotsyubynska has been dismissed from her job at the Institute of Literature, Academy of Sciences, UkSSR. Prior to that her work on poetics was rejected by her two supervisors, <sup>Petro</sup> Kolesnyk, a former concentration camp inmate, and Nina Krutikova, a pro-Stalinist Russian who in 1964 took part in the 5th International Congress of Slavists in Sofia, Bulgaria.

3. Nadiya Svitlychna, Ivan Svitlychny's sister, has left her job in the Kiev radio.

4. The campaign against Oles' Honchar continues with intensified strength. The official establishment is now disseminating the "news" that even Pope Paul VI was delighted with Honchar's novel, "Sobor" (Cathedral) and was going

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to propose it for a Nobel Prize. "So this is the best proof that this work had to be attacked." No one of course believes this although it is being disseminated even by such people as Korniychuk, Novychenko, Kyzya and others. People visiting Kiev nowadays are advised by official writers not to visit Honchar.

5. On May 22, 1968 the demonstration marking the anniversary of the ~~the~~ transfer of Shevchenko's body from Petersburg to Kiev took place as scheduled. Over 2,000 people gathered around the Shevchenko monument and groups of 50 to 100 or so gathered around the university and other public buildings. To foil the demonstration, the regime gathered huge crowds of Komsomol members to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Komsomol. They tried to snatch the limelight by public speeches, marches, etc., but in spite of this, the genuine demonstrators managed to put themselves through and in the face of the official program sang such patriotic songs as Shevchenko's "Reve ta Stohne" and his "Testament". The general impression was that on the whole the regime tried to avoid any spectacular incidents. Even the speeches made by the official spokesmen were accordingly tuned and thus, for instance, Pavlychko and Novychenko, <sup>among other</sup> ~~the~~ official speakers at the Komsomol gatherings, sounded quite patriotic. Nevertheless, the effect was not such as desired <sup>for instance,</sup> by official organs since Novychenko is generally hated for his duplicity and lack of character. At one time Novychenko was a strong supporter of the "shestydesyatnyky" (poets of the sixties) and his house was a gathering place for discussions and debates for the young writers. When the situation changed, he was the first one to attack them, quite often using their private expressions

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and opinions in his public speeches. He did not change when visiting Czechoslovakia in April of 1968. Novychenko was the one who strongly defended the attacks against Honchar's Sobor in front of the Czechoslovakian Ukrainians and repeated the important "news" about the Pope's alleged suggestion that Honchar be granted the Nobel Prize for this work.

6. There is a general trend among establishment writers to minimize the new anti-liberalization course in the Soviet Union. People like Kozachenko for instance, stress that there could be no return to the old Stalinist line and that the recent measures taken against Chornovil and his colleagues and against Honchar should not be exaggerated and "wrongly interpreted". In their view, the best proof is to be seen in the fact that Dzyuba continues to work in the Dnipro publishing house and Svitlychny "is still walking the streets of Kiev." They claim that the protest of the 126 should not be exaggerated in its importance or significance either. Some people were simply too naive to know what they were signing and later on withdrew their signatures. Drach was among those who signed the protest but admittedly he did not withdraw his name. There were also voices in Kiev expressing doubts about juxtaposing the protest of Ginsburg, Galanskov and co. with Chornovil, the Horyn's and the others. For instance, Pavlychko was one of those who thought that it was better to limit the protest only to Ukrainian intellectuals since evidently their Russian colleagues were connected with the Russian emigre ~~fascist~~ fascist organization, the NTS.

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7. Dzyuba and Svitlychny continue to talk from time to time with the chief of the KGB, V.F. Nikitchenko - of course on the latter's request. Nikitchenko always speaks in Ukrainian and pretends to be genuinely interested in "Ukrainian affairs". He is an intelligent bureaucrat, quite well read, knowledgeable, and tactful. Quite often, however, one notices in his eyes a strange gleam that makes one shiver. In short, he cannot be trusted one bit!

Quite often Nikitchenko shows Dzyuba and Svitlychny various articles written abroad about them. On such occasions, frequently, as Dzyuba puts it, "I don't feel too well listening to silly things that allegedly have been written about me." On the whole both Dzyuba and Svitlychny cope ~~with~~ quite easily with Nikitchenko's intelligence and knowledge. Dzyuba is <sup>a</sup>very bright, very intelligent man, who is able to captivate his interlocutors. He is a born orator who is very impressive in his arguments. He uses a very persuasive form of expression and is able to impress people just by his manner of speaking. Whatever he says sounds very profound even when in reality it is not.

Svitlychny is less "talkative", less impressive, but very sharp in his short comments and statements. He prefers to listen than to talk. In the opinion of some people, however, his analytical mind is even more articulated than Dzyuba's.

Recently Yevhen Sverstyuk has been coming to the fore more and more and he is now considered to be at least equal to Dzyuba and Svitlychny. However, Sverstyuk is much less of a theoretician and more of a practical politico. He is more outspoken and less tactful - a down-to-earth man who is very logical and practical in his conclusions. He is more inclined to black and white views, dislikes theories and theorizing. In the opinion of some people he is the

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real future leader of his generation and is the man to watch. He approved neither of Drach's nor of Stitlychny's article in Literaturna Ukraina and Visti z Ukrainy respectively. When Lina Kostenko told Stitlychny in this connection "to drown himself in Dnipro since he has nothing to shoot himself with", Sverstyuk nodded his head, indicating that she might be right.

8. The Czechoslovak events are considered to be instrumental in exacerbating the present political course in Ukraine. Since February 1968 meetings have taken place on all Party levels devoted to discussions of the situation in Czechoslovakia. The official attitude has been unmistakably hostile and warnings have been sounded to be prepared against any eventualities in Ukraine itself. In April 1968, on several occasions students at Kiev University were asked to identify themselves before being admitted to the lectures.

At the Party meeting in Kiev on April 29, 1968, among other issues, the following two points were also on the agenda: 1) events in the CSSR and 2) the situation of Ukrainians in the Presov area.

The attitude of Party officials was very hostile to "manifestations of some signs of contamination that have already reached our compatriots in this area." Those present were asked to watch carefully what is being written in Duklya and other Ukrainians papers in Czechoslovakia and not to get excited about everything printed there.

A similar attitude to Ukrainian activities in Presov has been expressed by the members of the Soviet embassy in Prague, personally by Chervonenko and his wife. Incidentally, Chervonenko's wife is generally regarded as the real ambassador who commands not only her husband but the whole embassy.

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In February or March of 1968, Ivan Chendey, a Carpatho-Ukrainian writer, visited his personal friend in Czechoslovakia, Gen. Valo Vasil (?) who is in charge of a military area in central Czechoslovakia, and on this occasion he also visited the embassy. Chendey himself had his share of trouble with Party circles after his speech at the 5th Congress of the Union of Writers of Ukraine in November 1966. He was accused of showing a Cuban colleague of his ruins of churches in Carpatho-Ukraine and thus subjectively engendering the impression that the Ukrainian government and Party was deliberately ruining cultural monuments.

9. In the mid 1960's some Ukrainians in Prague established contacts with the North Korean embassy there and handed over some "zakhalyavni" materials such as for example, the article about the arson committed in the Kiev library in 1964.

10. The conference of Ukrainians in Presov scheduled for May 25, 1968 which was to re-establish the Ukrainian Peoples' Council has been quietly cancelled. Shortly before the set date, various influential Slovak Party members phoned or talked directly to the organizers of the Congress and indicated quite strongly that the Central Committee of the Slovak Party was against it. In short, they advised to cancel the whole affair. It happened so suddenly that two delegates from Prague learned about the cancellation only after they had arrived in Presov. The chief of the Slovak Communist Party, Vasyl Bilka, a former tailor who graduated from a Party school and likes to claim that he has a PhD. degree, was also opposed to the Congress. On the whole, he is much less fond of the present liberalization trend than Dubcek. He is regarded to be in the middle between the liberals and the former Novotny adherents.

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In their attitude to Ukrainian affairs, Slovaks are manifesting quite a strong chauvinism. There have been individual outbursts of anti-Ukrainian sentiments and all the initiative on the part of Ukrainians is usually met with promises and indications that under the new democratic circumstances, there is no need to talk particularly of things Ukrainian. In other words, Ukrainians will get what they want anyway and without "Unnecessary manifestations of their sentiments." At the same time the Slovaks are disseminating various "scurrilous rumors", such as for instance, that should the Ukrainians fully Ukrainianize the Presov area, the Soviet Ukraine would ask for its separation from Czechoslovakia. There are also "complaints" being spread that shortly after 1948 many a "Rusyn" was collaborating with the Russians against the Slovaks. Despite all this, the Czechoslovakian Ukrainians feel quite certain that cultural autonomy will be granted to three separate rayons in the Presov area.

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